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Guilford Battleground Speech

CIA Is Defended by Bush

By David Bailey

Staff Reporter

GREENSBORO — George Bush, the new director of Central Intelligence, surprised National Park Service officials and bicentennial celebrators by defending his agency in a speech at Guilford Battleground yesterday at the dedication of a new visitor center.

In an almost pained tone, Bush deplored the agency's past errors, but assured his audience, which punctuated his speech with applause, that the agency had "rooted out those errors and put an end to them well before they were publicly revealed."

Bush said that he welcomed President Ford's new executive order designed to regulate the agency and "the responsible exercise of oversight by the Congress."

But he emphasized that much of what the agency does cannot be shared with the public or Congress. "You cannot conduct an intelligence agency out in the open," Bush said. "... There are certain pieces of information that must not be divulged — and they won't be. I don't think that the American people really want reckless disclosure."

Bush said that American intelligence is remarkably intact, despite what he called the vicious battering that CIA agents and their families have taken recently.

"I wish you could have met the son of Richard Welch," Bush told a hushed audience, "our station chief in Greece who was gunned down following disclosure of his name by people bent on destroying the CIA. This young man knew well that his father had died

for a cause in which he deeply believed."

In his only reference to the battle of Guilford Courthouse, Bush likened the patriotism of his intelligence agents to the fiber of the Revolutionary patriots who fought in the battle 195 years ago.

An orderly crowd of about 3,000, compared to an estimated 7,000 who showed up Saturday to greet President Ford, applauded Bush's remarks. Park rangers were

prepared for a demonstration. The North Carolina Civil Liberties Union had expressed indignation at Bush's participation in the celebration.

The NCCLU has scheduled a speaker to express anti-intelligence agency views. Morton Halperin, former member of the National Security Council and former deputy assistant secretary of defense, will speak here today.

But the most radical element at yesterday's celebration was a Mo Udall bumper sticker on a Fiat.

Most people strolled around the sunny park enjoying the blooming dogwoods and periwinkle or the thud of drums and the squeak of fifes coming from the First Maryland Regiment.

Other visitors visited the new visitor center, dedicated at the ceremony. The minimuseum, which one of the administrators called a "quick trip back into time" or a "history book for people who don't like to read" is open, like the park, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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